

"OVER THE TOP"

By An American Arthur Guy Empey
Soldier Who Went Machine Gunner, Serving in France

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EMPEY GIVES A DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK ON OBSERVATION POST DUTY.

Synopsis.—Fired by the sinking of the Lusitania, with the loss of American lives, Arthur Guy Empey, an American living in Jersey City, goes to England and enlists as a private in the British army. After a short experience as a recruiting officer in London, he is sent to training quarters in France, where he first hears the sound of big guns and makes the acquaintance of "cooties." After a brief period of training Empey's company is sent into the front-line trenches, where he takes his first turn on the fire step while the bullets whiz overhead. Empey learns, as comrade falls, that death lurks always in the trenches. Chaplain distinguishes himself by rescuing wounded men under hot fire. With pick and shovel Empey has experience as a trench digger in No Man's Land. Exciting experience on listening post detail.

CHAPTER XVI—Continued.

"I came out with the first expeditionary force, and, like all the rest, thought we would have the enemy licked in jig time, and be able to eat Christmas dinner at home. Well, so far, I have eaten two Christmas dinners in the trenches, and am liable to eat two more, the way things are pointing. That is, if Fritz don't drop a 'whizz-bang' on me, and send me to Blighty. Sometimes I wish I would get hit, because it's no great picnic out here, and twenty-two months of it makes you fed up.

"It's fairly cushy now compared to what it used to be, although I admit this trench is a trifle rough. Now, we send over five shells to their one. We are getting our own back, but in the early days it was different. Then you had to take everything without reply. In fact, we would get twenty shells in return for every one we sent over. Fritz seemed to enjoy it, but we British didn't; we were the sufferers. Just one casualty after another. Sometimes whole platoons would disappear, especially when a 'Jack Johnson' plunked into their middle. It got so bad that a fellow, when writing home, wouldn't ask for any cigarettes to be sent out, because he was afraid he wouldn't be there to receive them.

"After the drive to Paris was turned back, trench warfare started. Our general grabbed a map, drew a pencil across it, and said, 'Dig here.' Then he went back to his tea, and Tommy armed himself with a pick and shovel and started digging. He's been digging ever since.

"Of course we dug those trenches at night, but it was hot work, what with the rifle and machine-gun fire. The stretcher bearers worked harder than the diggers.

"Those trenches, bloomin' ditches, I call them, were nightmares. They were only about five feet deep, and you used to get the backache from bending down. It wasn't exactly safe to stand upright, either, because as soon as your napper showed over the top a bullet would bounce off it, or else come so close it would make your hair stand.

"We used to fill sandbags and stick them on top of the parapet to make it higher, but no use; they would be there about an hour and then Fritz would turn loose and blow them to bits. My neck used to be sore from ducking shells and bullets.

"Where my battery was stationed a hasty trench had been dug, which the boys nicknamed 'Suicide ditch,' and, believe me, Yank, this was the original 'Suicide ditch.' All the others are imitations.

"When a fellow went into that trench it was an even gamble that he would come out on a stretcher. At one time a Scotch battalion held it, and when they heard the betting was even money that they'd come out on stretchers, they grabbed all the bets in sight. Like a lot of bally idiots, several of the battery men fell for their

game, and put up real money. The 'Jocks' suffered a lot of casualties, and the prospects looked bright for the battery men to collect some easy money. So when the battalion was relieved the gamblers lined up. Several 'Jocks' got their money for emerging safely, but the ones who clicked it weren't there to pay. The artillerymen had never thought it out that way. Those Scotties were bound to be sure winners, no matter how the wind blew. So take a tip from me, never bet with a Scottie, 'cause you'll lose money.

"At one part of our trench where a communication trench joined the front line a Tommy had stuck up a wooden signpost with three hands or arms on it. One of the hands, pointing to the German lines, read, 'To Berlin'; the one pointing down the communication trench read, 'To Blighty,' while the other said, 'Suicide Ditch, Change Here for Stretchers.'

"Farther down from this guide post the trench ran through an old orchard. On the edge of this orchard our battery had constructed an advanced observation post. The trees screened it from the enemy airmen and the roof was turf. It wasn't cushy like ours, no timber or concrete re-enforcements, just walls of sandbags. From it a splendid view of the German lines could be obtained. This post wasn't exactly safe. It was a hot corner, shells plunking all around, and the bullets cutting leaves off the trees. Many a time when relieving the signaller at the 'phone, I had to crawl on my belly like a worm to keep from being hit.

"It was an observation post sure enough. That's all the use it was. Just observe all day, but never a message back for our battery to open up. You see, at this point of the line there were strict orders not to fire a shell, unless specially ordered to do so from brigade headquarters. Blime me, if anyone disobeyed that command, our general—yes, it was Old Pepper—would have court-martialed the whole expeditionary force. Nobody went out of their way to disobey Old Pepper in those days, because he couldn't be called a parson; he was more like a pirate. If at any time the devil should feel lonely and sigh for a proper mate, Old Pepper would get the first call. Facing the Germans wasn't half bad compared with an interview with that old firebrand.

"If a company or battalion should give way a few yards against a superior force of Boches, Old Pepper would send for the commanding officer. In about half an hour the officer would come back with his face the color of a brick, and in a few hours what was left of his command would be holding their original position.

"I have seen an officer who wouldn't say d—n for a thousand quid spend five minutes with the old boy, and when he returned the flow of language from his lips would make a navy blush for shame.

"What I am going to tell you is how two of us put it over on the old scamp, and got away with it. It was a risky thing, too, because Old Pepper wouldn't have been exactly mild with us if he had got next to the game.

"Me and my mate, a lad named Harry Cassell, a bombardier in D 238 battery, or lance corporal, as you call it in the infantry, used to relieve the telephonists. We would do two hours on and four off. I would be on duty in the advanced observation post, while he would be at the other end of the wire in the battery dugout signaling station. We were supposed to send 'through orders for the battery to fire when ordered to do so by the observation officer in the advanced post. But very few messages were sent. It was only in case of an actual attack that we would get a chance to earn our 'two and six' a day. You see, Old Pepper had issued orders not to fire except when the orders came from him. And with Old Pepper orders is orders, and made to obey.

"The Germans must have known about these orders, for even in the day their transports and troops used to expose themselves as if they were on parade. This sure got up our nose, sitting there day after day, with fine targets in front of us but unable to send over a shell. We heartily cursed Old Pepper, his orders, the government, the people at home, and everything in general. But the Boches didn't mind cussing, and got very careless. Blime me, they were bally insulting. Used to, when using a certain road, throw their caps into the air as a taunt at our helplessness.

"Cassell had been a telegrapher in civil life and joined up when war was declared. As for me, I knew Morse, learned it at the signaller's school back in 1910. With an officer in the observation post, we could not carry on the kind of conversation that's usual between two mates, so we used the Morse code. To send, one of us would tap the transmitter with his finger nails, and the one on the other end would get it through the receiver. Many an hour was whiled away in this manner passing compliments back and forth.

"In the observation post the officer used to sit for hours with a powerful pair of field glasses to his eyes. Through a cleverly concealed loophole he would scan the ground behind the German trenches, looking for targets and finding many. This officer, Captain A— by name, had a habit of talking out loud to himself. Sometimes he would vent his opinion, same as a common private does when he's wrought up. Once upon a time the captain had been on Old Pepper's staff, so he could cuss and blime in the most approved style. Got to be sort of a habit with him.

"About six thousand yards from us, behind the German lines, was a road in plain view of our post. For the last three days Fritz had brought companies of troops down this road in broad daylight. They were never shelled. Whenever this happened the captain would froth at the mouth and let out a volume of Old Pepper's religion which used to make me love him.

"Every battery has a range chart on which distinctive landmarks are noted, with the range for each. These landmarks are called targets, and are numbered. On our battery's chart, that road was called 'Target 17, Range 6000, 3 degrees 30 minutes left.' D 238 battery consisted of four '4.5' howitzers, and fired a 35-pound H. E. shell. As you know, H. E. means 'high explosive.' I don't like bunning up my own battery, but we had a record in the division for direct hits, and our boys were just pining away for a chance to exhibit their skill in the eyes of Fritz.

"On the afternoon of the fourth day of Fritz' contemptuous use of the road mentioned the captain and I were at our posts as usual. Fritz was strafing us pretty rough, just like he's doing now. The shells were playing leapfrog all through that orchard.

"I was carrying on a conversation in our 'tap' code with Cassell at the other end. It ran something like this: 'Say, Cassell, how would you like to be in the saloon bar of the King's Arms down Rye lane with a bottle of Bass in front of you, and that blonde barmaid waiting to fill 'em up again?'

The next installment relates how two artillerymen "put one over" on Old Pepper.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Use for Clothespins.

Clothespins make an excellent playing for babies. They can be used for babies or soldiers, or to make fences, trees, log houses and many other interesting things. Playthings that can be taken apart and put together again are good to have; also blocks with which the child can build all kinds of objects—engines that he can push along the floor, balls to bounce and throw, doll carriages, washing sets, etc. Dolls with clothes that button and unbutton and come off may be used to teach the children how to dress and undress themselves.

A QUARTER MILLION CALLED THIS MONTH

EVERY EXISTING CANTONMENT IN THE COUNTRY IS TO BE GREATLY ENLARGED.

FIFTEEN BILLION FOR ARMY

Over Eight Thousand Men Called From North Carolina Go to Camp Jackson.

Washington.—Simultaneously with the announcement that 232,000 men from 45 states had been called to join the colors in May, Secretary Baker indicated the scope of the government's plans for increasing its fighting strength by stating that Congress had been asked to appropriate approximately \$15,000,000,000 for the army for the next fiscal year. That amount is exclusive of funds provided in the fortifications bill which not only covers coast defenses, but as a rule provides the bulk of heavy field ordnance.

The call for a quarter of a million men during May, goes to all states except California, Oregon and Nevada, which with the District of Columbia already have supplied so large a part of their quota that it was decided not to include them this time. The movement in most states will begin May 25 and will be completed in five days. By this order the war department abandons its plan of assembling men in even monthly increments of approximately 100,000. Under the original program it was intended to call out not to exceed 860,000 men during 1918. The call for 110,000 in April and 232,000 this month will bring out in two months half of the number originally contemplated for the year. Officials made it clear that it is now the purpose to mobilize all the men for whom equipment and training facilities can be provided.

Need All Camps.

In preparation for this tremendous increase in the army, the military committee was told today that every existing cantonment in the country will be enlarged and every national guard camp utilized to its full capacity. It is regarded as probable that some new cantonments must be built, but in the interests of speed and economy of effort and material, pressure will be placed upon expanding existing facilities. Ground has already been obtained in the vicinity of several cantonments for the expansion and details of the new construction are being worked out by the general staff.

The men called out this month will be mobilized generally at the cantonments to which the men from the same states have previously been sent. In many cases they will find the divisions originally created at those camps gone. Some of the camps will have been converted into replacement divisions, and the new men will be redistributed in accordance with their qualifications.

To Fill Divisions at Home.

It is regarded as likely that the April and May drafts will be used largely to fill up divisions at home while the seasoned personnel from those divisions is sent overseas to fill the gaps. Since the number of divisions on the other side is rapidly and steadily increasing, the flow of replacement troops must increase proportionately.

The apportionment among the states of the men called today include:

Alabama, 6,820 to Camp Sevier, S. C.

North Carolina, 8,114 to Camp Jackson, S. C.

Pennsylvania, 7,700 to Camp Mead, Md., 4,000 Camp Lee, Va.; 3,000 Camp Humphreys, Va.; 2,923 Camp Greendale, S. C.

South Carolina, 1,900 Camp Jackson, S. C.; 238 Camp Wadsworth, S. C.

Tennessee, 4,130 Camp Pike, Ark. Virginia, 6,135 Camp Lee, Va. West Virginia, 4,797 Camp Lee, Va. New York, 6,800 Camp Dix, N. J.; 6,850 Camp Hancock, Ga.; 7,600 Camp Upton, N. Y.; 9,700 Camp Wadsworth, S. C.; 1,380 Camp Sevier, S. C.

NEW GERMAN PEACE

OFFENSIVE IS EXPECTED

London.—In the personal opinion of Lord Robert Cecil, minister of blockade, that failure of Germany's "knock-out offensive" on the western front will result in a big peace offensive, directed mainly against Great Britain and possibly made in an attractive form, but which will not afford any terms the allies can look at. In this opinion made in a statement, Lord Robert expressed the further belief that the few peace offensive would be largely for German consumption.

GERMANS USED UP 44 DIVISIONS IN NORTH

London.—A representative of General Radcliffe, director of military operations at the war office, summed up the military situation on the western front as follows:

"In the north while the Germans failed in their main objective they made their right flank secure by the capture of Kemmel, but we must regard the operation from the viewpoint of economy of men and they used five divisions from the general reserve

ANOTHER CONCORD SENSATION

Grows Out of Arrest, Trial and Acquittal of Gaston B. Means for Murder.

Concord, N. C.—As a sequel to the famous case growing out of the killing of Mrs. Maud A. King, widow of the late James C. King, Chicago millionaire, near here last August 29, and the subsequent notable trial last December of Gaston B. Means, her financial agent, who was acquitted of the charge of having murdered her, a sensation was sprung here when it developed that a state warrant had been issued by Justice of the Peace C. A. Pitts, for the arrest of C. B. Ambrose, who was prominently identified with the development of the case against Means last fall.

Ambrose is charged with misrepresenting himself as being in the service of the United States Department of Justice during the months of August, September and October, 1917. It is understood that the warrant was issued at the instance of parties representing Means.

In connection with the action against Ambrose it developed that persons close to Means are advancing the theory that Mrs. King was killed by a German spy, who is alleged to have shadowed Means during several weeks prior to the death of Mrs. King, and it is asserted that a warrant will very probably be issued early the coming week for the arrest of a "mysterious" German who was in Concord for several weeks prior to the killing of Mrs. King and visited Misenheimer Spring, the scene of the tragedy, a day or two prior to her death. From the same source comes the statement today that the bullet which killed Mrs. King is now believed on the strength of investigations made since the Means trial to have been intended for Gaston Means, the only person with the woman at the time she was shot.

Army Deserter Shot.

Asheville.—In a pitched battle between a United States deputy marshal, his posse and a band of deserters from the army fought at an early hour in the Barker's Creek section of Jackson county, one of the alleged deserters, James Messer, was shot by the officers and is now in a hospital at Waynesville expected to live only a few hours. A brother, Hastings Messer, is under arrest charged with desertion and resisting an officer.

For the past several months there has been much indignation on the part of the residents of Jackson county in that the Barker's Creek section of the county, which is rather wild and inaccessible, was the rendezvous of two bands of deserters from the army, armed with government rifles and ammunition, who defied arrest. Much indignation has been made of the sheriff of the county, it being charged that he was afraid to make arrests, and as a final resort a large number of requests came to the office of United States Marshal Charles A. Webb, of Asheville, for the appointment of a special deputy to assist the local officers.

A few days ago Charles C. Mason, of Dillsboro, was appointed deputy marshal and instructed to gather a posse and go after the men, and on Saturday night Mr. Mason, together with C. T. Roan, of Bryson City, and a posse of seven went to the home of the Messer boys, where Hastings Messer was arrested and in a battle between James Messer and the officer James was seriously wounded.

Jailed for Pro-German Talk.

Greenville, N. C.—No little excitement was occasioned on the streets here when news became current that J. H. Ketchum, of alleged German descent and a resident of the city had been placed under arrest by government officials for pro-German utterances the warrant charged him with violation of the espionage act, section three, which forbids, among other things, unpatriotic remarks.

Durham: Economic and Social.

Chapel Hill.—Durham County: Economic and Social is the title of a new one hundred-page illustrated bulletin that has just come from the press. It is the second study of county economic and social problems to appear in North Carolina, the first being Sampson county: Economic and Social, issued in late 1917.

NORTH CAROLINA BRIEFS.

It is learned that a large per cent of blackberry vines were destroyed by the extreme cold weather the past winter. In some localities the entire growth is said to be killed.

Transylvania county is putting partisanship out of business for the time being by the appointment of a committee to draft a proposition to be submitted to both parties. Perhaps Governor Bickett's proposal is practical wherever it is approached in the spirit in which it was made.

Monroe people are very much interested in the proposed cement highway to Wilmington and are willing to lend this movement their support. T. L. Riddle, secretary of the Monroe chamber of commerce, has written a letter to the Charlotte chamber of commerce pledging the aid of the Monroe organization in the movement. Statesville can now boast of a population of between 7,500 and 8,000, a considerable bit of territory being taken in as a result of an election last fall. If that part added is as good as that to which it was added, everybody ought to be proud.

160 MEN DETAILED TO STATE COLLEGE

A. & E. FOUND MOST SUITABLE BY GOVERNMENT FOR TRAINING IN SPECIAL LINES.

USE OTHER COLLEGES ALSO

Requirements of Army Make it Necessary to Train Thousands of Men for Modern Warfare.

West Raleigh.—Provost Marshal General E. H. Crowder has announced that 160 men will be detailed to the Agricultural and Engineering College of West Raleigh on May 16 for a two months' scientific course for preparation in the pursuits of such trades as automobile mechanics, radio or wireless telegraphers, machinists, electricians and telegraphers. Similar technical schools were designated in various portions of the United States but North Carolina's share of the war trained technical students will study at the Agricultural and Engineering College.

The war department has adopted a policy whereby 60,000 specialists will be trained in technical schools of the United States this summer. The students will not be assigned to any special branch of the army service until they have completed the two months course, at the termination of which time they will be distributed to the various branches of army service.

The requirements of the army for waging modern warfare make it important for the training of thousands of specialists. Other North Carolina educational institutions may later be designated as the training ground for these students, but the ready equipment and facilities at the Agricultural and Engineering College were found superior to other state institutions by the investigation committee of the war department.

Close Raleigh Pool Rooms.

Raleigh.—The pool rooms of Raleigh were ordered closed at midnight on May 31, when the city commissioners unanimously adopted resolutions declining to renew city license and describing pool rooms as harmful and unnecessary institutions, encouraging idleness fostering gambling and tending to increase crime.

The final action on the question of closing the pool rooms was taken after Mr. W. B. Jones, representing the owners of the places, had asked for a further postponement of the vote for another day in order that he could present additional argument for his clients. However, Commissioner Moonenham stated that he saw no reason why the matter should not be decided at once and the vote was taken.

The resolutions adopted were introduced by Mr. Moonenham as a substitute to Mr. Pace's resolutions, offered previously and made the pool room closing a moral instead of a patriotic move as provided in the Pace resolution.

Mr. Pace, explaining why he advocated closing the parlors for patriotic reasons, stated that he did not wish to embarrass officials of the present or any previous administration by making the issue a moral one. "If it is a moral issue today, it was a moral issue a year ago."

Were Penned in Tunnel.

Lincolnton.—While at work in a tunnel at the tin mine near town, Messrs. Jake Johnson and Jake Mosteller had a narrow escape from death when the tunnel, in which they were operating the hydraulic pressure apparatus, caved in and the men were completely buried by dirt.

Men at work at the mine immediately set to work with tools in an effort to rescue the men from their peril, and they succeeded in a short time.

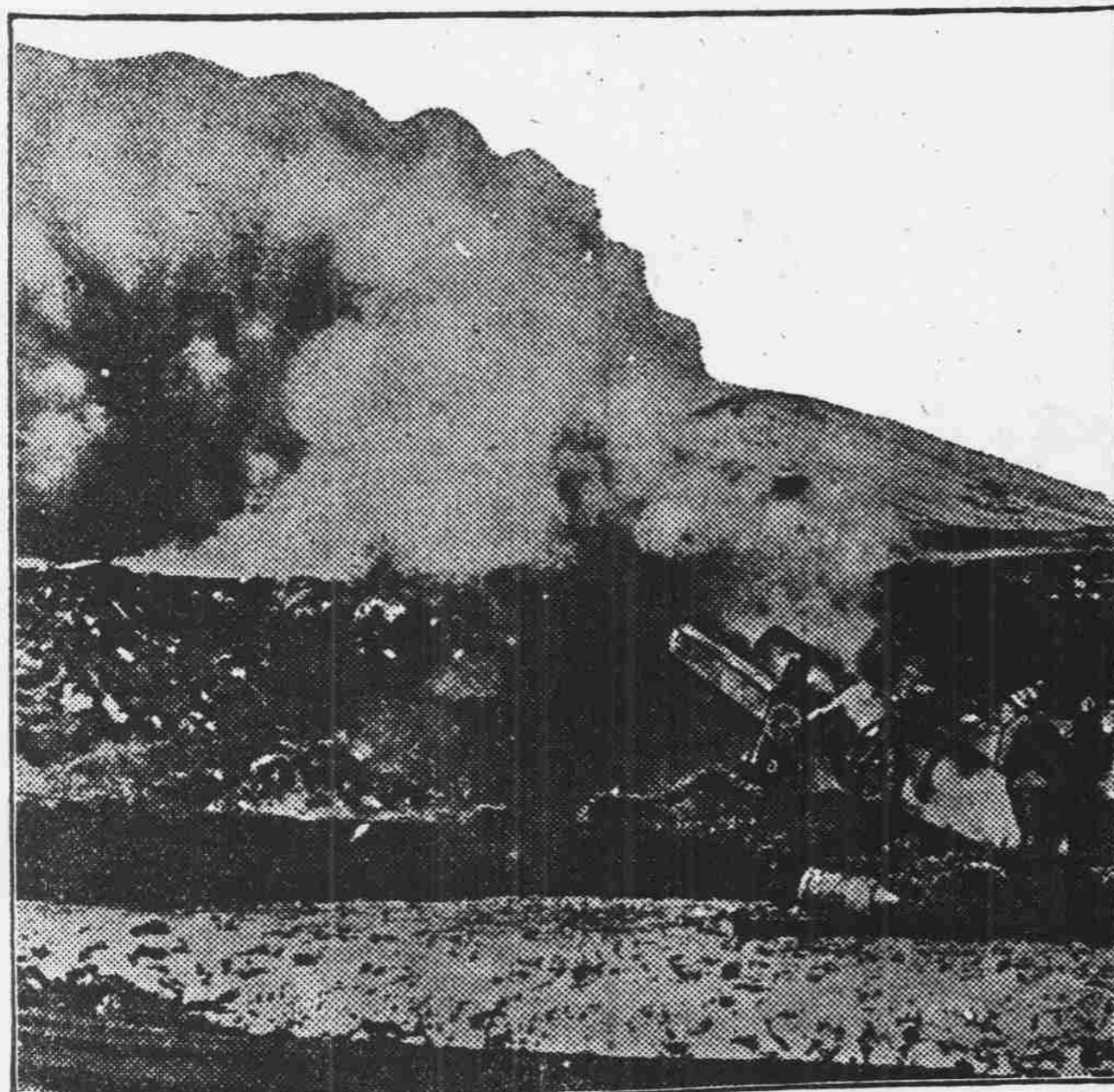
Neither of them was injured seriously. Mr. Johnson suffered a fracture of ribs and was painfully bruised. Mr. Mosteller's shoulder was dislocated, and he was otherwise bruised.

Tought War Near Over.

Charlotte.—A farmer and his son were walking along a highway in the count yeast of Charlotte when an automobile party of Liberty loan solicitors drove up. The old man was asked if he had bought a bond. He looked puzzled and asked them what they meant. They told him it was absolutely necessary that Liberty bonds be sold if the United States is to win the war. The farmer was startled and exclaimed that he had been told that the war was nearly over, but he bought a bond.

Gregory Elected President.

Raleigh.—Mr. W. N. Gregory, president of the East Cotton Oil Company at Hertford was elected president of the North Carolina Cotton Seed Crushers' Association at the eighth annual convention of the association held in this city. The convention held morning, afternoon and night sessions, which included a banquet. The officers elected for the ensuing year are J. I. Morgan, president of the Farmville Oil and Fertilizer Company, vice-president; H. W. White, Greenville, secretary-treasurer.



One of the Big Guns Barking.